

The Regional Committee,

Having reviewed the document presented by the Regional Director on regional policies on BCG vaccination;¹

Noting that, although the trial of BCG vaccines in south India showed a failure to protect against bacillary pulmonary tuberculosis, there is sufficient evidence from many countries of the effectiveness of BCG vaccination;

Noting also that local epidemiological and environmental factors may determine the effectiveness of BCG vaccination, and that the trial in south India was not designed to measure the effectiveness of BCG vaccination against childhood tuberculosis;

1. URGES Member States:

- (1) to maintain the current policy that BCG vaccination should continue, particularly in relation to infants and young children;
- (2) to periodically adjust their policies, particularly with respect to the target age groups, taking into account the epidemiological trends in each country as the prevalence of tuberculosis declines;
- (3) to establish mechanisms for collecting the information necessary for the adjustment of BCG policies, such as the incidence of tuberculosis by type of disease, age of onset, relationship of each case to previous history of BCG vaccination, occurrence among the vaccinated of serious complications, and the estimated costs of vaccination;
- (4) to make every effort to maintain the coverage of BCG vaccination and the high quality of the vaccine, which involves care of the vaccine and the technique of vaccination; and

¹Document WPR/RC32/15.

(5) to promote studies on the effectiveness of BCG vaccination among infants and young children;

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

(1) to provide technical cooperation with respect to:

(a) collection of the epidemiological data necessary for the adjustment of BCG policies in order to take into account the changing trends of tuberculosis;

(b) the training of health workers in the organization and assessment of BCG vaccination, care of the vaccine, and the technique of vaccination, in order to improve and maintain the coverage and high quality;

(2) to promote studies on the effectiveness of BCG vaccination among infants and young children.

Seventh meeting, 25 September 1981